

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1499

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, UG

SUBJECT: UGANDAN POLITICAL SITUATION

REFS: (A) STATE 204686; (B) NAIROBI 8867

IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST PER REFTEL A, THE FRG
FOREIGN OFFICE HAS PASSED US THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM
ITS EMBASSY IN KAMPALA.

BEGIN TEXT:

1. THE REPORT BY TORGERSON IN THE WASHINGTON POST
OBVIOUSLY REFERS TO EVENTS IN UGANDA THAT TOOK PLACE A
FEW WEEKS AGO. IN FACT, A WEAKNESS IN AMIN'S POSITION
WAS NOTED THE END OF JULY. THE EMBASSY CONTINUOUSLY
REPORTED ON THIS, JUST AS IT DID ON THE FOLLOWING
DEVELOPMENTS THAT WERE MARKED BY AMIN'S INTENSIFICATION
AND LATER RELAXATION OF SECURITY.

2. IN THE MEANTIME NO NEW DEVELOPMENTS HAVE
OCCURRED. AMIN, AS IT LOOKS, IS "SITTING FAST IN
HIS SADDLE" AGAIN. THE SCENE ON THE STREETS, AT
LEAST IN KAMPALA, HAS COME ALIVE NOTICEABLY IN THE LAST
TWO WEEKS, EVEN THOUGH THERE STILL IS GAS RATIONING.
WHEN THIS RATIONING IS TO BE LIFTED CANNOT BE FORESEEN
YET. AS IT LOOKS, MILITARY PERSONNEL, WHO RECEIVE
UNLIMITED AMOUNTS OF GAS, ARE INTERESTED IN THE MAIN-
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TENANCE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO

EXPLOIT THE BLOOMING BLACK-MARKET OF GAS FOR THEMSELVES.

3. THE SECURITY SITUATION FOR WHITES, ALSO FOR AMERICANS, HAS RELAXED NOTICEABLY. ATTACKS ON THE MEDIA BECAUSE OF ALLEGED SUBVERSIVE TACTICS HAVE STOPPED ALMOST COMPLETELY IN THE LAST 14 DAYS. ALSO, IMPRISONMENT OR EXTRADITION OF WHITES HAS NOT BEEN NOTED WITH AN EXCEPTION OF TWO CANADIAN MISSIONARIES AND ONE BRITISH BUSINESSMAN. THE EMBASSY, AS A MATTER OF FACT, IS IN TOUCH WITH MOST AMERICANS WHO REMAINED IN KAMPALA IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO BE OF ASSISTANCE ON DEPARTURES IN EVENT OF A TIGHTENING OF SECURITY.

4. ON AUGUST 25 THE BRITISH CLEGG, HELD FOUR WEEKS IN MAKINDYE MILITARY PRISON, WAS RELEASED AFTER THE FRENCH EMBASSY, ACTING AS PROTECTING POWER FOR THE BRITISH, DETERMINED HIS WHEREABOUTS THROUGH INFORMATION FROM A FELLOW-PRISONER AND ENERGETICALLY REQUESTED HIS RELEASE THROUGH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. AMIN HAD PREVIOUSLY DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF CLEGG'S IMPRISONMENT. CLEGG REPORTED TO BRITISH DIPLOMATS THAT HE WAS WELL TREATED, GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND ESPECIALLY NOT MISTREATED. INFORMATION FROM NAIROBI THAT A SECOND BRITON, TULLY, IS ALSO FREE AFTER BEING MISSING FOR FOUR WEEKSCOULD NOT YET BE CONFIRMED.

5. SEVEN AFRICANS WHO WERE IMPRISONED FOR ALLEGED PARTICIPATION IN AN ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW AMIN IN MID-JUNE WERE ALSO RELEASED WITH CLEGG. AMIN USED THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR A GRANDIOSE TV APPEARANCE, IN WHICH HE ACTED AS GENEROUS COUNTRY-FATHER WHO DISPENSED MERCY. AMIN SAID THAT HE WANTED TO FOREGO THE PUNISHMENT BECAUSE THE PRISONERS HAD ACTED UNDER PRESSURE FROM KISSINGER, SOUTH AFRICA, GREAT BRITAIN AND ISRAEL. GOD WOULD PROTECT HIM AND PUNISH THE GUILTY, JUST AS NOW THE BRITISH ARE SUFFERING A TERRIBLE DROUGHT. END TEXT. HILLENBRAND

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